Mr. Stephen Rosenfeld, deputy editor, editorial 7/31/93
The Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Mr. Rosenfeld,

Reading this morning's Post's coverage of the newest of the tragedies that never end in the troubled Middle East, when I came to R. Jeffrey Smith's headed undoubtedly truthfully but also unrealistically, I was reminded of a book I read probably before you or Ms. Greenfield were born. Young as I was in those Great Depression days, days of their own daily suffering and of the horrors ahead clearly visible, and avidly as I then read, one of those hundreds of books I devoured was Robert Nathan's Road of Ages. Its thrust is that a Jew is primarily something else.

I then recognized some of that in me.

Nathan tells the story of all the Jews of the west being banished and walking to the only place they are to be permitted to live, a particularly inhospitable remote part of far-eastern Siberia. As his story unfolds Jews who were labor leaders were in time of immediate, pilgrimage crisis primarily other than then Jews. The same for bankers, industrialists and others.

The experiences and observations of a fairly long life as a non-practising Jew confirms Nathan's understand and vision.

The Jewish owner of a successful magazine made radical changes that soon killed it to end the policy under which my Nazi cartel exposures were published.

When as a result of that work, when I was also at the urging of our Department of Justice, an unregistered British agent in economic warfare, I was in contact with the European undergound and had from the Poles and Czechs early indications of the holocaust in Poland, I could not sell that story. I finally gave it to a small Jewish magazine.

Later, when I was in the part of OSS transferred to the State Department, I was quite literally the victim of a pogrom. The then-current observation was that with Ben Cohen in a relatively high position in State, State would answer critics by pointing to him and saying, "We do, too, have our Jew." It then was traditional that no Jew would ever hold a significant position in State and I do not recall any exception.

The pre-Pearl Harbor attitude of the Congress was so blatant, despite a couple of Jews in it that when Martin Dies wanted to take over over the UnAmerican committee, then headed by John McCormack, with his vice-chairman Sam Dickstein, Dies campaigned by assuring Members "There won't be any damned Jews on my committee." It worked and there weren't.

When Dies and his gang came after me when they learned that I was researching a book on them, with emphasis on their friendliness with our native nazis, he and his associates entrapped and framed me, with enormous, uncritical attention in the papers not one of which cared

for or sought the truth. Not even Drew Pearson, who had been their instrument and ultimately arranged counsel for my then associate and me. I am not bragging, please believe me, The point will become obvious, I think. The Dies gang even got a law passed to use against me, and it as able to delay Dave Pine's confirmation as a federal district court judge to pressure an indictment. In the end I took the grand jury over and it indicted the Dies agent on two felonies, refusing to indict my friend and me. That was reported, but not with serious attention.

In my current writing I've been thinking of the learning experiences of my life and work that enabled me to do what I have done, what is not taught in colleges. My reaction to today's Post's reporting and editorial did not require much thought, so much was fresh in mind.

Perhaps in fairness I should digress to inform you that, while my work on our political assassinations is on them and alone is factual on them, the thrust of all my books is that in time of great crisis and with those assassinations since then all the basic institutions of our society failed and continued to fail. This is close to central in my current book pub date of which I do not know. It will be by a small publisher who has no real means of promoting it but that will be what I intended, a record for history.

I am not unaware of the slight but encouraging changes in the Post's editorial expressions and to an encouraging degree in its news. But both fall far short of what is, by all interests, really needed. There is also an unrealistic theme in them. The readers are not told what surely the Post knows and are told what as certainly the Post should know is much less than it could say.

Yes, I am old-fashioned in many of my beliefs, perhaps in all my political beliefs. I think, for example, that for all its failings our system is the best yet devised for living in freedom. I think our founding fathers were the wisest political thinkers in the world's history. Thus I also believe that despite the odds against its working as intended by those great and wise men, representative society can work only when the electorate is fully and accurately informed.

After more than a hundred international rejections for my first book, which was the very first on the Warren Report - can you imagine how a former reporter felt having to face that reality? - Norton told me they would be glad to publish it if I would revise it into what meant an attack on the government I could not then prove. Oh, it could be theorized easily enough and fame and fortune were to await those who did that. That Norton offer is what impelled me to publish the book myself-when I was broke and in debt.

Feltrinelli published it in Italy. He then demanded that I write him a J'Accus. I also refused that possible ticket to the kind of fame and fortune I did not want.

Aside from indicating what you may regard as being dominated by beliefs, I am also trying to indicate that I am sensitive to what I regard as media failings and my belief that they are of vital importance in our society,

Smith reports that "The United States has known about the Iranian arms pipeline through Syria to Hezbollah for years." I do not recall any such disclosure by State for all those years. It is certainly news to most Post readers and its readers include most policy makers and the Congress.

Smith also reports State's belief "that Syria periodically permits arms shipments ...to pressure ...Israel in peace negotiations."

This gets to one of the reasons for my reporting some of my personal experiences and how they were learning experiences. It also gets to what the Post has yet to report in all its many stories on the current peace negotiations. Again perhaps prejudice, but I regard them as the sterile and stately ritualized dancing of policy minuets.

What I learned and what I regard as a truism and what Israel's policy and wars leave without question is that it simply will not be pressured when it considers its safety and the security of its people in jeopardy.

Having no choice it from time to time bows to United States pressure. But there come points when it does not. It has learned, as I did, that the weak survive the strong only by the most vigorous acts, however they may be regretted.

Syria knows better and it has other objectives, objectives the Post has yet to tell its readers about, objectives not Syria's alone in the Muslim world. More than recovering the Golan heights.

Smith also reports that the purpose of the Secretary of State's coming trip to that area is to "promote progress in regional peace negotiations."

Has the Post informed its readers, and I emphasize the importance to them of what the Post, so often the Post alone, about the supposed basis of those negotiations? I do not mean that the Post has never mentioned it. Of course it did years ago. But the Post's writers on the subject do know it and do not find space for it.

The basis of the UN's resolutions is that the State of Israel be permitted to exist in peace and within secure borders.

When Arafat did not dare recognize this as the right of that state and ultimately was forced to make a statement our administration could misrepresent as him having said it, the Post was entirely uncritical and reported the administration's knowing misrepresentation. What Arafat really said is that he recognozed the right of the people of Iseael to live in peace and within secure borders. As most informed reporters should know and as State surely does know, he would not have survived public recognition of the State of Israel's right to be at peace and secure.

Where in the recent negotiations has this basis of those negotiations been reported to the Post's readers or stated in its editotials?

Can it be reported without the farce of the current negotiations being exposed and policies not aimed at meeting that basic condition of peace along with it?

As the Post also knows, it is not merely that Iran provides its terrorists with modern arms, with Syria permitting transit. Almost the entire Arab world does that and much more. It provides the other means of those terrorists, more than this one gang of them, including a wide range of help, from sanctuary to ample funding.

And simultaneously it can reasonably be expected that they really want peace with Israel? That is how peace, real peace, can be reached?

Is there any real indication that any Muslim power really does want peace with Israel?

Is there really anything of consequence any one of them has done toward that end?

Other than Sadat, who did not survive it? Or than Abdullah, who also didn't?

Has the Post on its oped page ever undertaken to explore for its readers, so many of whom are so important, other reasons than religion or love for those now all called Palestinians when so many are not really that?

Is there a really democratic state in all of Islam? One that can with equanimity hope to survive its people seeing such a shining light when not distracted by all the induced fervor of hating Israel, wiping it out remaining in the PLO's charter?

My last reporting, rewriting the wire-service hourly newscasts to include other wire copy for the more sophisticated WQQW audience, not a few of whom were high in the military, leaves clear in my mind much of the war for Israel's survival after the same Arabs now supposedly wanting peace with it tried to wipe it out. It also is clear on the fact that the allied powers turned free that venomous Hitlerite, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, the man who spent the war in Berlin inflaming the Arab masses against us, ~~[illegible] free~~. He was surely a war criminal. But then there was the tradition of British governmental anti-semitism that even Churchill could not control during and after both world wars. If he had been able to there would not likely be that perpetual tragedy and the well-understood provisions of the Balfour Declaration would have been fully implemented. Along with Trans-Jordan there would have been the Jewish state of the remaining about 20 percent of the Palestine territory. Perfidious perfidious Albion through Anthony Eden and Labor's Bevin.

The history and the causes of that now self-perpetuating tragedy are clear enough, if the Post has never sought to inform its readers so many of whom are in policy roles.

Today's editorial is states "The first priority is a cease-fire." It does not indicate whether that is a hopeful or a hopeless expectation today. With all those reasonably wealthy and amply armed Arab terrorist gangs who live for the certainty that there can be no cease fire, is it at all realistic?

That editorial ends stating "Israel needs to accept that its exposure to guerrilla rockets does not give it the unrestricted right to disrupt Lebanese civilians - to remain in occupation of Southern Lebanon."

Is this not to demand that Israel make no meaningful effort to protect its people, that it forever forget that basis of those UN resolutions I cite above? Does it not also seek to impose on the tiny State of Israel standards and policies other than those of the

CC: Ignatius

United States in much of the world, pre-eminently in that same Lebanon and including, to mention only a few, where not United States lives were involved, ~~like~~ as in Korea, Viet Nam, Grenada and much of Central America?

How about the permanent "disruption" of so many Israeli lives now in its fifth decade, from Lebanon and elsewhere?

Would the Post recommend to our government that it ignore the daily killings and serious injuries to many of its citizens - for any reason at all? For <u>decades</u> yet?

Is this a proper or even fair or ~~hopeful~~ helpful condition for the Post to impress upon all who learn so much of what they know from it, particularly those who have policy roles in the legislative or executive agencies?

Until all the Arab terrorists are restrained in some meaningful way by those who to now among the Arab powers have financed and armed them, there can be no meangful peace in that area and there is no basis for any peace that any Israeli government can hope to survive, leave alone the State, in that hoped-for peace within secure borders.

Have not the Arab powers created their own Frankenstein, and need this not be addressed?

Does any one ~~those~~ of those dictatorial rulers want to suffer ~~Sata's~~ Saddat's fate, or Abdullah's, or the fate of so many not in high position? Can any of them realistically hope to?

There is also ~~to~~ the usual question of the consequences of major-power intrusions, not forgetting the United States in which in the recent past even the Morgenthau vetoed letting Jews who escaped Hitler land here when they reached here on the ship the St. Louis. Refused, along with the rest of the world, to accept thousands of Jewish children gathered in southern France and who, thanks to the United States along with the rest of the world were incinerated!

I hope you will ask yourselves if any rational standard of decency, morality and even ~~kind~~ honesty and the meeting of traditional American concepts of the role of the press in out country has been met by the Post as well as by our goverbment in this matter, including in what it is now saying that is not what it was saying in the recent past.

It is in the hope that you and Ms. Greenfield and David Ignatius will give this some thought that I have taken this time when there is no certainty that I will live long enough to complete the book I've started.

I do hope that you will, along with having Santayana's wisdom in mind, that those who forget the past are doomed to relive it.

It is a good feeling at 80, as I assure you younger people, to look back on such accusations and condemnations as being a "premature" anti-fascist! That is how those of us who opposed fascism in Italy, Germany and Spain were condemned. It was costly, but it was well worth the cost!

Reading this when your days are so busy will take time. I hope you will, and I do hope that in all interests, including your own interests at my age, you will really give this real and impartial thought.

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg Harold Weisberg